

January 30, 2009

RE: Flathead Community Health Center

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing this letter today to stress the tremendous help the Flathead Community Health Center has been to me and my children. I am a single parent with children that do not qualify for Medicaid or Chips and I cannot afford private insurance for them.

My children are patients at FCHC. I only had to pay \$10.00 on the last visit that I otherwise in no way would have been able to afford. I would have been left with no alternative other than the emergency room and a huge bill to go with it. Not to mention my dream of becoming a homeowner becoming more and more unrealistic because of unpaid medical bills added to my credit report.

I also simply would be in constant pain without the dental services recently offered at FCHC. This could spell disaster for me as a single parent trying to be self sufficient. Last year even with dental insurance just being able to meet the deductible and co-pay turned out to be bad on my credit. I simply could not afford it. Now thanks to FCHC I can finally afford to take care of our dental needs

I encourage you to continue this funding for families like me. Thank you.

*Nancy Butcher* (406) 885-7060  
Nancy Butcher

January 26, 2009

To The House Appropriations Committee Members:

My husband, Robert Jones, is a diabetic and requires care often and we chose to use the services of the Community Health Center of Flathead County and Ginny Lewis after seeing two other doctors in Kalispell. Ginny has given him excellent care and the staff has been great. Also, Bob is currently laid off from his job and the fee scale at the clinic helps us out during these times.

The services they provide are very important to us and we urge you to continue to fund this program.



Christine Jones  
24 Bitterroot Estates Dr.  
Marion, MT 59925  
(406) 854-2017



**Flathead Community Health Center**  
*"Improving access to health care in our community."*

EXHIBIT 4  
DATE 1/30/09  
HB 285

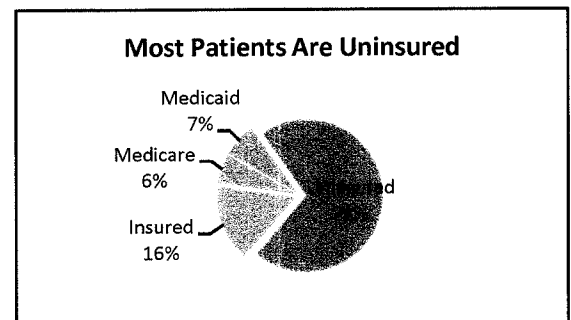
**Flathead Community Health Center (FCHC), the first State funded Community Health Center in Montana, is located in Kalispell and serves the Flathead County area.**

**FCHC – What's happened . . .**

- May 2008 - Awarded State funding and became the first State funded CHC!
- June 2008 - Expanded primary care services to the community with a physician and nurse practitioner.
- December 2008 - CHC grant application, scored 95 points, not funded due to intense competition and limited federal funds. (Cut-off for funding was 96 points).
- January 2009 - Initiated dental services via a dental van and contract dentist.
- January 2009 - Became Federally Qualified Health Center Look-A-Like. This will improve chances for federal funding and FCHC will receive enhanced reimbursement from Medicare and Medicaid.
- January 2009 – 3<sup>rd</sup> floor addition (funded by Flathead County Health Department) is 60% completed, and scheduled for completion in April 2009.

**FCHC patients are . . .**

- 1900 Flathead County residents with over 3600 primary care visits
- 70% uninsured
- 60% with incomes below 100% of the federal poverty level (income of \$22,050 for a family of four)



**FCHC services include . . .**

- Comprehensive primary care (including lab and x-ray) and preventive health services
- Preventive dental services
- Chronic disease management
- Assistance and referrals for other services (medications, transportation, specialists, etc.)

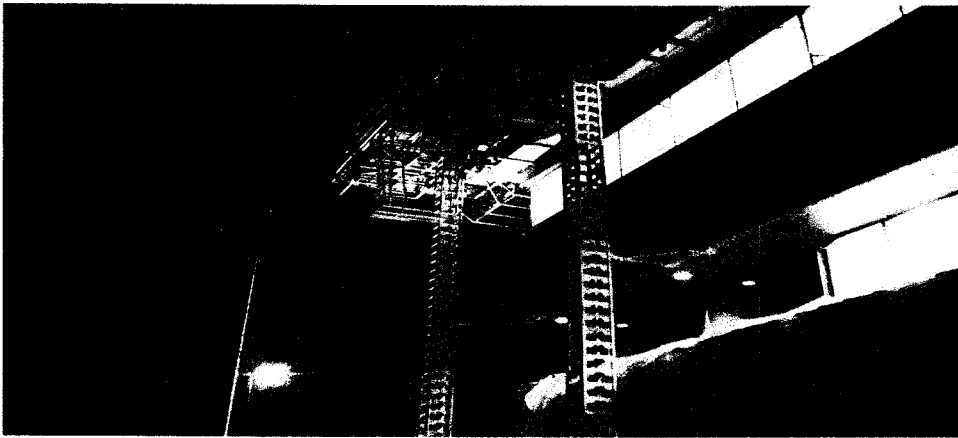
**How FCHC operates . . .**

- Follows all federal Community Health Center regulations and expectations
- Governed by a community board with a consumer majority
- Located in a federally designated medically underserved area
- Patients are billed on a sliding fee scale based on family size and income
- Bills for all insurance types
- Works in partnership with other community organizations

**Why funding is needed for FCHC . . .**

- 29,860 people in Flathead County have incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$21,660)
- 19% (14,158) have no health insurance coverage (2005 Census Estimates)
- Many businesses have recently cut staff. Unemployment has more than doubled in Flathead County from 1,708 to 3,461 (November 2007- 2008), increasing from 3.7% to 7.3%. This is much higher than the State unemployment rate of 4.9%.
- Flathead County is federally designated as having a critical shortage of primary care and dental providers for its low income population, in need of 6 physicians and 5 dental providers.
- 68.1% (3,569) of Medicaid children in Flathead County had no dental visit in 2006 (MT Medicaid Data)

Dr. Holdhusen, Medical Director;  
Lois Wisher, Medical Assistant;  
Patient for a well baby check.



Outside of Third Floor of  
new CHC. Scaffolding is  
for the brick work.  
November 08'

Concrete being poured for the  
new CHC in October 08'



Chris Krager, Board Member;  
Sherry Stevens-Wulf, Board  
President; Dr. Holdhusen,  
Medical Director;  
Senator Jon Tester;  
Wendy Doely, Executive Di-  
rector